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CASES OF FALSE BRACHIAL ANEURISMS.

EXTRACTED FROM BARON DUPUYTREN'S LATE CLINICAL LECTURES AT THE HÔTEL DIEU.

A YOUNG man, twenty-two years of age, was bled in the median basilic vein by a physician, who transfixed the artery through the vein ; a scarlet-colored stream immediately issued with great force from the wound. Having at once perceived the nature of the accident, he applied over the wounded point a graduated compression, which at first arrested the hemorrhage, but it soon returned, and was several times renewed. The patient now presented himself at the Hôtel Dieu, and nine days after the injury a tumor of the size of a nut, soft, fluctuating, and pulsating isochronously with the heart, was perceived at the bend of the arm. On compressing the artery above, the pulsations were arrested ; when the vessel was compressed below, they, on the contrary, increased. The existence of an aneurism was thus clearly indicated. The wound in the vein was healed, and nothing led to the idea that the latter vessel communicated with the artery. As the ligature was the surest means of alleviating this unfortunate accident, it was practised on the following day. The patient was placed in bed, the arm being in a state of supination, and an incision two inches and a half in length was made along the course of the artery, above the joint. The subcutaneous cellular tissue was now found infiltrated with blood ; the fibro-cellular sheath, which encloses the artery and median nerve, was thick, dense, and easily torn ; a large vein running across the incision was divided, and the vessel and nerve were exposed. A ligature was passed between them by means of a grooved sound and stilet, and we thought that nothing was embraced in it except the artery ; however, on raising up the two extremities of the stilet, in order to assure ourselves that the vessel alone was comprehended, the patient experienced great pain, followed by numbness along the branches of the nerve. The artery was now separated from the nerve by a careful dissection, and the ligature drawn tight ; this occasioned no pain whatever ; the pulsations of the tumor instantly ceased, and the circulation was arrested in the fore-arm. The edges of the wound were now brought in contact, the thread was placed in one of the angles, and some lint with a bandage was applied. This case soon terminated favorably ; the fore-arm always preserved its natural color and temperature. On the third day pulsation commenced in the radial and ulnar arteries, but did not extend to the tumor. On the tenth day the ligature came away, and on the nineteenth the patient was able to leave the hospital.

Remarks.—This case, gentlemen, gives rise to several reflections,

and may serve to show you how ligature of the radial artery, which is generally regarded as a simple and easy operation, may present several difficulties. If you regard only the rapidity with which you may come down upon the nerve and artery, the operation will appear a quick and easy one; but the most essential point, yet one which was formerly much neglected, is to isolate completely these organs from one another, and to avoid wounding any other branches which may happen to pass under the instrument. Hence I prefer to spend a considerable time in dissecting the artery completely from the surrounding nerves, to running the risk of embracing them in a rapid operation. This patient presented you with a new example of the success obtained in cases of a wounded artery, by the application of a single ligature between the heart and the injured point; but all patients are not so fortunate, and in a great number of circumstances the surgeon is forced to tie the vessel above and below the wound, in order to save his patient from the danger of a secondary hemorrhage. The following case is an illustration of this:—

An envoyé from Brazil, recently arrived at Paris, was mending a pen in his study, when the knife escaped from his hand, was projected several feet into the air, and fell with the point on the anterior and external part of the left fore-arm; the sharp blade penetrated the skin and subjacent parts, and opened the radial artery. Abundant hemorrhage took place. A surgeon was immediately called in, and hoping that a pressure might be sufficient to obtain a cure, he applied graduated compresses, and a bandage from the fingers to the elbow; this apparatus remained on for several days without being removed, during which time no loss of blood took place; and when it was at length changed, the external wound was found to be healed; but an aneurismal tumor was formed, and the surgeon hoped to remove this also by long-continued pressure. In this he was disappointed; the tumor not only remained, but acquired increased volume; I was now called in, and thought that the radial artery should be tied; the patient consented, and the operation was immediately performed; one ligature only was placed above the tumor, which ceased to pulsate as soon as it was drawn tight; the circulation was also arrested in the arteries of the fore-arm. We now proceeded to dress the wound, but this had scarcely been finished, when the circulation was re-established in the inferior portions of the ulnar and radial arteries, and the tumor presented pulsations exactly similar to those before the operation. It was therefore indispensable to tie the artery below the aneurism; this was done, and in fifteen days the patient was perfectly cured.

A wine merchant, 45 years of age, of good constitution, but subject to hæmoptysy, was bled by his usual attendant: the lancet had been scarcely introduced when the blood flowed in jerks: a strong compression was now exercised, but without success: and a month afterwards, when he came to consult me, there was an enormous tumor in the folds of the elbow. The operation was urgent, and instantly performed: pulsation ceased in the tumor as soon as the ligature was drawn, though some thought they felt a slight oscillation in the radial artery. During the night succeeding the operation the patient was seized with a violent spitting of blood, which compelled Dr. Max to bleed him twice. It is

not a rare circumstance to witness symptoms of plethora, or even hemorrhage, after the ligature of large arterial trunks ; sometimes the patient is affected with palpitation, dizziness, oppression, &c. ; sometimes with epistaxis, hæmoptysis, &c. ; in all these cases, one or two bleedings are generally sufficient to remove the accident. It was remarked in the present instance that pulsation was very soon felt in the radial artery, but not in the tumor—a disposition, depending no doubt on the influence of the capillary vessels. Experience teaches us that it is by no means a favorable symptom to see the numerous anastomoses which exist between the two ends of the artery, re-establish the circulation too promptly, because in certain cases this rapid return of blood may bring back the pulsations of the tumor. This, however, was not the case in the present instance, for the patient left the hospital cured about four weeks after the operation.

Concluding Remarks.—I shall terminate this lecture, gentlemen, by a remark which is the fruit of long observation ; viz. that an artery may be tied above the injured point with almost certain success, if the lesion be recent, and of such a nature that the edges of the wound made in the vessel resemble a fresh wound disposed to unite : on the contrary the ligature presents much less chance of success when the lesion is old, and its edges are cicatrized, and consequently incapable of taking on the adhesive inflammation. In the first case, ligature of the superior portion of the vessel is sufficient, whether the effused blood be in communication with the external air or not : while in all other cases we must tie both ends of the vessel. I know of no exception to these rules except when the injured artery is situated at the extremity of a limb, when the numerous and varied anastomoses render it necessary to tie both ends. Perhaps this theory may give you the explanation of some facts which have up to this time appeared difficult of comprehension.—*Lancet.*

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF DENTAL SURGERY AS PRACTISED IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY HORACE KIMBALL, M.D., SURGEON DENTIST, BOSTON.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

THE writings of the ancients, from the earliest ages of the world, give evidence that the teeth have always been regarded as constituting one of the essential characteristics of beauty ; and the estimation in which they have been held, has borne some general relation to the progress of civilization and refinement. As far back as we can trace any attempts towards the cure of diseases, these organs were not overlooked by those who practised the art of medicine—and among the ancient Egyptians, Dental Surgery was known as a distinct branch of medicine. It does not, however, appear that anything was done by the Egyptians or the ancient Greeks or Romans towards the cure and restoration to health of diseased teeth. Their operations seem to have been confined to cleaning and extracting, and also setting artificial teeth, and these operations were done by the practitioners of medicine. This continued to be the case until

early in the 17th century, when the loose, vague, and metaphysical notions of the early philosophers gave way to the philosophical method of inductive research, established by Bacon and his cotemporaries, and thus opened a field of investigation too extensive to be profitably occupied in all its departments without a division of labor. It was about this period that dental surgery become known as a distinct branch of medical science, and engaged the exclusive attention of individuals, who were known as surgeon dentists. About the year 1700, those who designed to devote themselves to the practice of this branch of the profession in France, were compelled to submit to an examination by men "learned in all the branches of medical science;" from this time, therefore, we date the commencement of modern dental surgery.

In taking a hasty glance at the profession from this time down to an early period in the present century, we see little to relieve the almost unbroken monotony of shade which is cast over the picture. To the French, more than to any other nation, are we indebted for what little advancement the profession made during that time. They have given us many works upon the subject, but very few of them are of any practical value. The great and leading object of our profession—viz. arresting the progress of disease in the teeth, and restoring them to a state of health—seems to have been in too great a degree overlooked and forgotten in the attention which was paid to the more simple and least important part of it, that of making and setting artificial teeth. One of the principal causes that retarded the advance of the profession, is one that exists at the present day—viz. the want of harmony of design and union of effort among those who had the means and opportunity of advancing the interests of the science.

When we look at the present state of the profession in the United States, so far from being surprised that more progress has not been made, we are astonished that so much has been accomplished by the few who have labored to elevate the character of the profession, towards rooting out the prejudices which are the legitimate fruit of the empiricism and quackery which from the very commencement, by usurping the place of scientific treatment, have disgraced a highly useful profession, and given the public no standard by which to judge of its intrinsic worth, except the bungling and unscientific operations of incompetent and illiterate empirics.

It is difficult to convey any correct idea of the present state of the science in this country by general remarks; we must descend somewhat to particulars. The whole number of those who are engaged in the practise of dentistry may be divided into three classes. The first class embraces those who having qualified themselves for the duties of their profession by a thorough course of study of the great principles of medicine and surgery, have entered upon and pursued it not simply as a means of subsistence, but also with a design of raising it from the disrepute and degradation into which it has fallen. The numerical strength of this class is comparatively small—being confined to a few practitioners in several of our large cities and towns, besides here and there one scattered sparsely through the country, whose operations serve to show what may be done by the united effort of science and skill. It is to the successful practice

and writings of this class that we are chiefly indebted for the rapid advancement of the science within the last fifteen or twenty years.

The second class comprises those who have passed through a preparatory course of medical studies, and commenced the practice of dentistry without having devoted that time and attention to the acquisition of practical dentistry, without which it were as impossible that a man should make a good operator, as that a surgeon should become well qualified for the duties of his profession who had never given any attention to the study of practical anatomy. Notwithstanding this great disadvantage, however, many of this class, who have established themselves in populous cities and towns, by the opportunities they have had of seeing the operations of the best dentists, and some years practice, have at length reached a degree of excellence in their operations which entitles them to a comparatively respectable rank in the profession. Still we cannot but reprobate and condemn as altogether unjustifiable the course of any man, who instead of devoting a year or more to the study of practical dentistry under the direction of some experienced and able operator, should spend half a dozen years in *arriving* at the point from which he should have *started* in his professional career, and at the expense of an incalculable amount of mischief which he cannot avoid being the author of before he reaches that point. The remaining part of this second class seem to be satisfied with engrossing a good share of business and maintaining an average reputation, in an already degraded profession—and truth compels us to say that their influence in preventing a just appreciation of the merits of the profession, is as much greater than that of the remaining class, as have been their advantages, and as is their consequent influence in the community.

The third class includes all others who are engaged in the practice of dentistry; among whom may be found shoemakers, ostlers, locksmiths, watchmakers, constables, bakers, sailors, and in fact men of all occupations, who either from want of capacity for, or success in, the employment to which they were bred, or for some other reason, have taken advantage of the unprotected state of the profession, and assuming the title of dentist, have scattered themselves up and down the land, proving a disgrace to the profession, and, as we truly believe, a curse to those who are so unfortunate as to be the dupes of their assurance and artifice.

It may perhaps be said that this third class cannot exert an influence sufficiently extensive upon the community to destroy the reputation given to the profession by faithful and skilful operators. This, however, is a great error, for nothing is more certain than the fact that wherever they go they make the profession responsible for their gross impositions and useless, nay mischievous operations. Indeed this feeling is so strong in some parts of our country, as to make any honorable man ashamed of his profession, and wish not to be known as a dentist if he desires the respect of those he meets. This is not the language of hyperbole; it is plain, sober truth, of which any man may be convinced who will take the trouble to inform himself. But it may be asked, how do such men obtain the confidence of any community? We answer, just in the way that empirics in the other branches of the profession obtain it. It is no difficult matter to procure certificates or letters of recommendation from re-

spectable and influential men of all occupations and all professions, with whom the individual may happen to be acquainted (and we are sorry that a regard to truth will not here allow us to except practitioners of medicine); and although these are *generally* from persons utterly incompetent to judge of all the professional qualifications of an accomplished practitioner of dentistry, yet this is to him a matter of no consideration ; for on his journey to the next town, these documents are sufficient to procure him the names of as many as he needs to grace a flourishing advertisement, and prove him a very master in his profession—and under such circumstances, who can question his abilities or skill ? In this way, and by such unprincipled means, are the inhabitants of country towns and villages especially, made the unconscious dupes of a set of men who would disgrace any profession. But this practice is not confined to the country. This city can furnish more than one original of this sketch. Indeed there is no community so enlightened as to offer the slightest obstacle to their unblushing effrontery, and no place so innocent in its implicit confidence as for a moment to protect it against their unprincipled designs.

Such being the character of the practitioners of dentistry (and we have been mindful " nothing to extenuate nor set down aught in malice "), what else was to have been expected but an entire and unqualified distrust of its power to answer the ends which it proposes ? for the comparatively small number in whose hands dentistry has made rapid strides towards perfection, have been able thus far, from various causes, to do but little towards counteracting the current of popular feeling against this much abused science. This want of confidence has followed as a matter of course, and presents one of the most insurmountable obstacles over which we must pass before dentistry can attain the rank to which it is entitled.

Has the writer been giving loose to malevolent and uncharitable feelings—indulging a spirit of bitter censoriousness—attempting to build up the reputation of the few upon the ruins of the many ? No—his aim has been to give a simple sketch of what dentistry now is—taking the country through—in the hope that it may engage the attention of all liberal and enlightened men, and especially the members of the medical profession, and secure their aid and co-operation in all proper efforts that may be made to rescue this science from its now too well merited opprobrium. He does not deny that he feels a deep and just indignation at the barefaced impositions which are daily practised upon an unsuspecting community ; but he appeals for the truth of his statements to every intelligent and meritorious member of the profession ; he appeals to the thousands who have been and are now suffering the effects of their misplaced confidence in those whose selfishness presides over the scales wherein the health, comfort and happiness of their unfortunate patients are weighed against a paltry fee.

Notwithstanding the melancholy and humiliating truths we have been obliged to record as to the present state of dental surgery in this country, we have reason to believe that in the United States the science has made more rapid progress, and attained a higher rank, within the present century, than in any other country. There is perhaps no part of the world where the teeth are more highly valued than among ourselves, and pro-

bably no people suffer so much from dental diseases—hence arises one cause of this improvement. Yet this elevation of the science we must be understood to say relates not to the country at large, but is principally confined to a few of our large cities and their adjacent districts, and has been brought about by the untiring exertions of a few individuals in these cities to diffuse information upon the subject, and whose successful practice has for years demonstrated that by faithful and judicious operations the teeth may be preserved to the end of life. And if any one individual more than another merits the honor of having given the first effectual impulse towards that state of perfection at which we hope to see the profession arrive, and of which it is capable, that one is the late Dr. Hudson of Philadelphia—a man who may justly be called the John Hunter of dentistry. He was among the first to substitute a rational and scientific mode of treatment for the temporary and palliative one that diseased teeth formerly received—showing most conclusively, by his own excellent operations, that in the hands of skilful and scientific practitioners nothing is more certain than that the teeth may be radically cured, restored to a healthy condition, and made to subserve the purposes for which they were formed as long as the system requires their aid ; and it is no disparagement to those members of the profession whom he has left behind to sustain the credit and advance the interests of the science, and which they are so successfully accomplishing, to say that his loss will not soon cease to be felt.

It has been well said by a highly respectable member of the profession, that " its acme of perfection will be when every set of teeth shall by nature or art be rendered perfect, regular and healthy, and kept so during the lives of every individual." But can this be done ?—is it within the power of dentistry to attain a " consummation so devoutly to be wished? " We think it is. In fact, instances of this may now be found in the practice of probably most of our best operators. I have more than once heard it remarked by the gentleman with whom I pursued my professional studies in this city, that he has, in the circle of his practice, families where he has been obliged to fill many of the permanent teeth of the children almost as soon as they have made their appearance, and to fill most of them before the age of 20 years ; and yet notwithstanding this peculiar tendency to disease, these individuals, by submitting to frequent examinations of their teeth, and to operations as they became necessary, have preserved them all, and at this time they present a healthy appearance, and bid fair to do so for life. In truth, there are no operations in surgery which, if done as they should be, are more certainly successful in their results than those for saving the teeth from the ravages of disease. But unfortunately, the manner in which these operations are performed is a point which meets with but little attention. One of the most common and erroneous notions prevalent in regard to our profession, is that if the teeth are only filled and protected from the air they are safe, and that nothing more is necessary to constitute a good operator than an ordinary degree of manual dexterity. Hence too often beautiful sets of teeth, that might be preserved for life, are, by the injudicious or unskilful operations of incompetent persons, ruined, and the loss of the teeth, after

having been filled, is proof to the patient that dentistry is all a piece of imposition.

It is cheering, however, to witness the rapid advance of the science in this as well as other cities in our Union, where there are a sufficient number of good operators to give character to the profession; and although we have here a host of prejudices to encounter, and a sufficient number of incompetent dentists to give strength to those prejudices, yet the profession is rising in the public estimation every day ; and nothing is wanted now but the united, vigorous and well-directed efforts of the friends of the science, to place it on an enlightened and liberal foundation, and secure for it the confidence of the community, which it will then be able to protect from imposition.

However formidable may be the present appearance of those barriers which have been thrown around the science, they are by no means insurmountable—and we most heartily concur in the opinion expressed in a recent private communication from one of our most eminent dentists in a southern city, that the only efficient course to be pursued is to call a convention of the most reputable and experienced dentists, either in New York or some other city, to take into consideration the present condition of the profession and the claims which the community have upon it, and adopt such measures for the protection of the public as shall most effectually secure it from the malpractices to which it is now exposed. It is by some such means, and also by the diffusion of information through the mass of the community, that the profession is to be raised to the same rank with its sister branches. In the pursuit of this object we shall receive from no class of persons such efficient and valuable aid as may be rendered by the general practitioners of medicine ; and from the acknowledged liberality of the profession, we have no doubt that their co-operation will be cheerfully given whenever any suitable measures shall be proposed for the improvement of the science and its restoration to public confidence.

And here we may perhaps be allowed to suggest one or two ways wherein much may be done for the science by physicians ; and first, that no individual of our profession should receive their support or countenance, either by recommendation or in any other way, who has not an established reputation as a scientific and successful operator, or who is not recommended as a skilful and competent person by some dentist whose reputation is known and established—in other words, as he would not recommend any one as a practitioner of medicine who had not passed an examination by a board of well-qualified medical examiners, so let him not recommend any one as a practitioner of dentistry, unless he shall give evidence, by reference to men of known standing and reputation, that he is duly qualified for the duties of his profession.

Physicians have it in their power also to do much for the profession, and for society at large, by giving a greater degree of attention to the *second* dentition of children than has usually been given. During this interesting process, every child, where there is the least disposition to irregularity from disproportion between the size of the teeth and the jaws, or from malformation or any other cause, ought to see the dentist two or three times a year, and oftener if need be, to have performed whatever

the resources of his profession will enable him to do in such cases. Were this uniformly the case, we should not be pained as we now are by the deformity which we are daily compelled to witness, with the consciousness that it is entirely the result of ignorance that there was any preventive, or of culpable indifference on the part of parents; for there is scarcely any supposable case in which the most irregular set of teeth, by constant care from the commencement of the second dentition, may not be made regular and beautiful.

In this brief sketch we have been able to do but little more than make general statements; but had we space to go more into detail, we might mention facts which would astonish those who are not personally acquainted with the state of the profession. We are aware, however, that general as have been our remarks, they may be thought by some to be severe and uncharitable. It has certainly not been our intention to censure unjustly; and those whose daily practice brings them into contact with the malpractice which we have spoken of as so abundant in the profession, will bear testimony that the half has not been told.

We augur favorably for the future advancement of the science, from the results of the efforts of the few last years. The public are asking for and receiving information upon this subject—and in the precise ratio of its diffusion, will be the confidence of the community in the powers of the science to accomplish what it proposes.

August, 1834.

IODINE IN SCARLATINA.

BY J. W. FORD, M.D.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

In the autumn and winter of 1832–3, the second species of this complaint (scarlatina anginosa) prevailed in this vicinity, to some considerable extent. Among the unfortunate subjects of it, was W. G. jr., merchant, aged 25, who submitted himself to the care of one of those dangerous innovators, properly called *quacks*, who knew as little about the nature of the disease as of the appropriate remedies, and who uniformly made use of emollient poultices, to the exclusion of every other remedy in the complaint, and as uniformly produced the disagreeable, though natural result of such practice, viz. abscesses of the throat. On the seventh day of the complaint, I was called to take the charge of this case. I found the patient laboring under great difficulty of breathing—deglutition and articulation wholly suspended—the parotid and sub-maxillary glands swelled to an alarming degree—the tongue occupying the roof of the mouth—fever considerable, though not violent. Patient has had no sleep for the last four days. I immediately adopted my usual practice in the complaint, which I believe is not new or singular with the profession, with the exception, perhaps, of the following first named gargle. Gave him mist. of spts. turp. and treacle, āā, simmered together; which soon produced a copious discharge of thick, ropy mucus, followed by dark patches of slough from the fauces. Continued this, alternated with the

pepper mist., as gargles, and ext. app. of hops and vinegar. Next day, found him much better; breathes apparently easy; can swallow liquids, though with difficulty. Continue the same remedies, together with sol. of borax, nitre and ipecac.

3d day.—Patient can articulate distinctly, and swallows apparently easy. Fever slight; swelling of the glands but little abated and very hard.

Viewing the existing inflammation as sub-acute, as is undoubtedly the case in this complaint, and knowing the virtues of iodine in glandular and other sub-acute inflammatory affections, accompanied with swelling, I ventured upon its use in this case, as there was no appearance of a purulent change in the structure of the glands. Apply tinct. of iodine ext. twice in 24 hours. Proportion—

Iodine, ʒj.
Alcohol, ʒj.

4th.—Glands reduced to nearly their natural size. Patient eats and sleeps well—walked out.

5th.—Discontinued remedies.

I have been thus careful to detail the particulars of this case, for various reasons. 1st, to show the efficacy of the remedies adopted by the writer in the treatment of this complaint. 2d, to introduce what I conceive to be a new remedy in the complaint, to the consideration of the readers of your useful Journal—inasmuch as there often follows a painful, protracted swelling of the parotid gland in this species of scarlatina, which I am confident may be effectually prevented by a timely use of this remedy. I have used it in cases similar to the one related, and in every instance with the like happy result.

Waterville, Me., Aug. 18th, 1834.

WATER FROM LEADEN PIPES DESTRUCTIVE TO LEECHES.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

Sir;—I am not aware that it is generally known, that water which has passed through leaden aqueducts is destructive to leeches. Complaints have frequently been made to me by my patients and others, that their leeches died after a few days, however frequently the water was changed in which they were kept—and in several instances, it was stated that their color became whitish or grey. On inquiry, it invariably appeared that water was used which had run through leaden conductors.

A few months since, I advised a person what might be expected, if such water was used in preserving her leeches. She replied, the water was perfectly pure and soft; but in a few days her leeches were all dead.

Perhaps some of the readers of your Journal may profit by the above hint, since the value of leeches is now so justly appreciated, and water, particularly in the country, is so frequently conducted to dwelling houses by leaden pipes. Yours, truly, L. Howe.

Jaffrey, N. H., Aug. 19, 1834.

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, AUGUST 27, 1834.

DR. HOWE'S DISCOURSE ON QUACKERY.*

THE pamphlet containing Dr. Howe's discourse has been published several weeks, and we plead guilty for not having sooner presented our readers with an abstract, at least, of this very amusing production. The fellows of the Society before whom we had the pleasure of hearing it delivered, have, ere this, probably received copies ; but we are unwilling to have such an epigrammatic and truly original exposé of modern quackery confined to the members of the Massachusetts Medical Society. Quackery exists everywhere, and the principles of practice and the laws by which it is upheld are universal in their operation ;—the Doctor's essay is therefore fitted to all meridians.

" The Quack Doctor," says Dr. H. " considers any part of this country as his hunting ground ; go where you will, through city, town or village, or through the wide expanse of thinly populated regions, his footsteps may be traced by marks of devastation. He levies his tax upon the credulity of all classes of people, from the judge upon the bench to the peasant who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow.

" The weapons of his warfare are extorted from every part of the material world ; from the animal, the vegetable and the mineral kingdoms, in multifarious combinations, from the all-corroding caustic which destroys everything before it, to the inert Vegetable Pulmonic Detergent, which is said to clarify and sweeten up the blood."

" It has been well said, by an acute observer, that 'the less we know of the material world, the more extensive we suppose our acquaintance to be with the world of spirits ; there can be no doubt, that from ignorance of the operations of nature, and of the laws of the animal economy, has originated that predilection for superstitious remedies, which in every age has constituted a prominent feature in the character of the people ; a portion of the people, at least, have neither leisure nor inclination to reason, and credulity is of course more convenient for them than the researches necessary for the investigation of truth.'—Their opinion of medical skill corresponds exactly with Dogberry's views of writing and reading, that it comes by nature ; hence an Indian doctor, a modern prophet, or a seventh son, is the man of their choice in difficult cases."

" Among the circumstances which have had a direct tendency to increase the pernicious effects of quackery, is the willingness with which men of respectability permit their names to be attached to certificates of the efficacy of quack remedies. Upon this list may be found the names of magistrates, doctors of divinity, doctors of law, and, strange as it may seem, even doctors of medicine, men from whom the community have a right to expect better things ;—thus a celebrated Panacea is carried to the uttermost parts of the earth, with the names of distinguished medical

* A Discourse on Quackery. By Zadok Howe, M.D. M.M.S.S. Read before the Mass. Medical Society, June, 1834.

professors to recommend it ; while the name of an ex-professor of one of our most respectable medical schools, is going down to posterity in glaring capitals, on the wrapper of a bottle of aromatic snuff."

Had we room, it would delight us much more to reprint every page, than to mutilate any part by promiscuous extracts.—The following story, which from the orator's lips was exceedingly piquant, is nevertheless quite illustrative of genuine quackery, as it occasionally shows itself among the elite.

"I was called upon to examine a tumor upon the neck of a gentlman in a neighboring State. Upon removing his cravat, which partially concealed the tumor, I discovered a ten cent piece attached to a cord, which passed around his neck, together with a string of gold beads hanging in festoons over the tumor. I first made inquiries touching these 'deposites of the precious metals,' and was informed by the patient that he had consulted a seventh son, who presented him with the ten cent piece, to be constantly worn about his neck ;—but that the gold beads had been subsequently directed by a *regular practitioner*, who informed him that the silver was a very good application, but that in real scrofulous humors the gold was more powerful."

Dr. Howe is a staunch temperance man, and shows his regard for the character of the profession.

"There is a custom which sometimes prevails among practitioners of respectable standing, which is nevertheless a species of quackery ; they prescribe, for a sinking faintness at the stomach, strengthening bitters to be steeped in old Holland gin, while the scientific apothecary advertises Huxham's Tincture of the bark prepared in Cognac brandy. These articles produce their exhilarating effects and seem to afford temporary relief,—but bitters, like all other sublunary things, pass away ; they are gone before the patient is aware of it ; he then concludes to try for a few days the effect of the gin alone, and is agreeably surprised to find that the gin answers his purpose very well without the bitters. And he who takes the bark, in the same easy way, comes to the conclusion that old Cognac brandy, if it be really nice, is a pretty good substitute for Huxham's Tincture ; he takes it, and says he always feels the better for it.

"The physician whose prescriptions may be productive of such results, must upon deliberate reflection feel a weight of responsibility which nothing but habit can render tolerable ;—he actually puts into the hands of his patient a license to become intemperate, for which he is justly accountable."

But to return to the text.

"The trade of compounding and vending quack medicines, has increased in this country to an alarming degree ; the business has become systematized, and affords constant employment for thousands of individuals, who had rather subsist by their wits than by their labor. Here foreign impudence and Yankee ingenuity have produced results which are truly astonishing. Many of these medicines are distributed from house to house by tin pedlars—who are not only ready to accommodate their customers with tin graters and coffee pots, but also with jaundice bitters, cough drops and Hygeian pills, all warranted genuine, and highly recommended. The tax which is in this manner levied upon the people, great as it is, is of little moment when compared with the positive evil which attends the

use of these articles. A single patentee, who is constantly at home compounding his medicines and sending them through the country, is doing more injury to the community than a host of itinerant quacks."

"There is a mistaken impression abroad in the world, that quack doctors and patent medicines, by preventing and curing diseases, diminish the business of the regular practitioner; and that his opposition to quackery arises from selfish motives. Now this mistake should be corrected. We have proofs without number, which tire by their sameness, that spirit-drinking leads to poverty, litigation and crime, and consequently affords employment for the lawyer;—no one doubts the truth of this; but it is equally true, that the use of quack medicines, by multiplying and aggravating chronic diseases, is constantly affording employment for the scientific physician; this fact, having attracted very little attention, is not generally known by the people at large."

A specimen of our author's wit.

"Some idea of the extent to which quack medicines are circulated may be formed by the country practitioner. He is compelled by circumstances to carry his medicines with him, and to deal them out with his own hands. In his excursions abroad, he frequently has occasion to inquire for phials at the house of his patient; this inquiry brings forth the family medicine chest, where he is almost sure to find a goodly number of empty phials and pill boxes, which had once been filled with patent medicines, while printed certificates of marvellous cures supply him with wrapping paper for his Dover's powders. Here he finds anti-bilious pills, Gordak's physical drops, anti-scorbutics, and worm-destroying lozenges. In this same chest he may also find the wreck of the once popular Conway medicines, bearing upon their envelope, between an index and a mark of admiration, a caution more salutary than the medicines themselves, '*as you value your health, be particular.*' A due regard to this caution might have saved many lives."

In speaking of the knavery of patent medicine venders, our author shows himself an accurate observer and a severe inquisitor.

"It is curious enough to notice the ingenuity with which some of these things are got up. I will, with your indulgence, exhibit a single specimen of this kind of advertising;—we will take, for instance, 'Dr. Relfe's Aromatic Pills,' for females. Here we find a medicine offered for sale, with which the purchaser would expect to procure abortion. The advertisement is couched in artful phraseology; still the language is too plain to be misunderstood, even by that class of individuals for whom it is intended. These pills are said to be innocent in their operation, but powerful in removing female obstructions; married ladies will find them equally useful, except in cases of pregnancy, when they must not be taken. Price five dollars a box. There is the article; there is the price; and who can mistake the object?

"Now please to mark this prohibition; these pills are not to be taken *by married ladies* during pregnancy. I will illustrate this prohibition by an anecdote of the Revolutionary war. A portion of the American army was stationed, at a certain time, near the residence of wealthy farmers, where pilfering from the inhabitants was strictly prohibited by a general order: a number of the officers, while walking together at sunset, discovered above their heads a flock of turkeys perched upon a tree. One of

these officers turned to his waiter, and observed to him, with a significant nod, 'John, you perceive here are turkeys, but remember, *they are not to be disturbed.*' This prohibition was perfectly understood, and it is hardly necessary for me to add that these officers supped upon turkeys that night."

Finally, the writer closes by suggesting some general remedies for the intolerable evil of quackery. Such, for example, as giving public lectures for the express purpose of exposing the baseness and imposition of all who may be engaged in the nefarious business of making, selling, or prescribing the vile nostrums which are swallowed down by the good people of these United States at the annual expense of half a million of dollars.

"I am aware that the plan," he concludes, "suggested in the foregoing discourse, for the suppression of quackery, may be considered impracticable and visionary, and that it may have to encounter the sneers and ridicule of unbelievers;—but be it so,—a want of faith among the people retarded for a time the progress of the temperance cause:—I am however fully persuaded that this thing is practicable. There is a redeeming power that will not always sleep. The people of New England will, sooner or later, by this or some other method of a similar kind, divest themselves of those shackles of ignorance and imposition with which they have been so long enslaved."

Dr. Howe is an eminent practitioner, who must have had very ample opportunities of familiarizing himself with the system of quackery he has so ably and satirically displayed. The whole article ought to be stereotyped and circulated at the expense of the different State Societies. Such a course would have more influence in extirpating the disgraceful impositions of every day quackery, than all the machinery the doctor has proposed to set in operation to effect the same desirable end.

PROFESSIONAL VEXATIONS.

In looking over some of the London journals, it is curious to observe the constant warfare kept up between the officers of different hospitals, dispensaries, and other medical charities. Pupils complain of their instructers, and they in turn belabor the governors, who make their grievances known through the same channel. There is a tone of bitter sarcasm, too, accompanying these out-pourings of invective, altogether unknown in this country. All this, however, is probably referable to the actually crowded condition of the profession in England. Such is the constitution of things, that there always will be great men and distinguished men, in all classes of society. As physicians are influenced as much by pecuniary interests as gentlemen of other professions, it is by no means strange that in the strife for possession, they sometimes commit themselves. The same causes, however, which oblige them in England to fight for bread, have developed, in particular instances, some of the most extraordinary mental powers which have ever been exhibited in Europe. In this country, we are not yet obliged to labor so much, and consequently have accomplished much less in medical philosophy;—but, happily, thus far we are at peace among ourselves.

MEDICAL MISCELLANY.

Swelled Legs and Varicose Veins.—A newly-invented article is beginning to attract the notice of medical men in London, called *elastic bandages* for varicose veins, anasarcous swellings of the legs, &c. How they are made, or what advantages they possess over the common bandage ordinarily used by surgeons, does not distinctly appear.

Jaundice, with Cerebral Affection.—Several cases are related, in the London Lancet, of jaundice, accompanied with cerebral affection. In the case of an aged woman, in whom the cerebral symptoms were very well marked, purgatives, and the usual remedies for jaundice, were found successful.

The Legislature of Georgia, at their last session, granted the Medical College, located at Augusta, $10,000 in ready cash, and $5,000 in land. The city council pay the faculty for their services in the hospital, for ten years, $5,000 more ; and $6,000 have been raised by subscription for the purchase of apparatus.

Dr. Brewster, of Georgia, proposes to cure goitre by the action of two springs, winding round the neck—so that there shall be lateral pressure on the tumor.

Dr. Mott's operation, by which he extracted a monstrous calculus, whole, nearly 12 inches in circumference, weighing 17 ounces, Avoirdupois, is, we believe, without a parallel. The patient died on the fifth day after. It should be remarked that the stone could neither be bored nor crushed.

Dr. Dunglison, favorably known in this country as an author and an accomplished lecturer, has prepared a "*Table, exhibiting the doses and properties ascribed to the principal medicines and officinal preparations, for the use of the medical class in the University of Maryland.*" The work would be well received by others, in this section of the country.

Sixty-six medical diplomas were granted at the commencement of the Transylvania University. There were 262 students attending the lectures. The institution is one of high character and usefulness.

Dr. Augustus L. Warner, generally and favorably known to the profession as a private lecturer in Baltimore, has been unanimously elected, by the board of visiters, Professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Surgery, in the University of Virginia. This is as it should be—rewarding merit.

Dr. J. R. Coxe, of Philadelphia, has in press "an inquiry into the claims of Dr. Hervey to the Discovery of the Circulation of the Blood, wherein is demonstrated the injustice of those claims, and an attempt made to place this discovery on a more equitable footing." We hope the publisher will favor us with a copy, as we are extremely desirous of knowing what can be said on the subject.

☞ Since writing the above, we have received from the author a title-page of this work, with the information that it will probably be published in about three weeks, and also with the promise of a copy.

Dr. A. C. Draper is preparing a treatise on *Mania à Potu*. If well written, the work will be extensively read—not by physicians exclusively, but by all the advocates of temperance in the twenty-four States.

M. DESCHAMPS has detailed a singular case of congenital malformation of the brain, in a man of 43. The fissure of Sylvius was prolonged to the superior face of the left hemisphere. There were two openings, around which the cerebral convolutions were folded—and a communication therefore between the centre and the periphery of the brain.

Cholera.—The total number of deaths by cholera in New York, from the commencement of the disease on the 23d of July to the 22d inst. at noon, including those in the hospitals and almshouse, is 167. At the latter date the disease was apparently abating.

In Montreal, the number of deaths for five weeks previous to the 17th inst. was 1171, of which 816 were by cholera.

In Quebec, the number of victims to the disease has been 1169.

In Buffalo, N. Y., it is prevailing very extensively.

We acknowledge the receipt of a full and interesting medical history of the celebrated Springfield somnambulist, drawn up with great care for this Journal by Dr. Belden, who it is well known has had the charge of this case, with the assistance of Dr. Woodward of Worcester. In order to publish it entire, it will be necessary to issue a double No. of the Journal, which may be expected in a fortnight from to-day. We doubt not those of our readers who receive the Journal weekly, will willingly dispense with its reception till that time, with the expectation of then receiving a scientific account of this extraordinary case.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending August 23, 27. Males, 11—Females, 16.

Of consumption, 4—drowned, 1—intemperance, 1—infantile, 2—inflammation of the bowels, 2—dysentery, 5—croup, 1—debility, 2—accidental, 1—lung fever, 1—bleeding of the lungs, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 1—hooping cough, 1—cholera infantum, 1—cholera morbus, 1—fits, 1. Stillborn, 1.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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